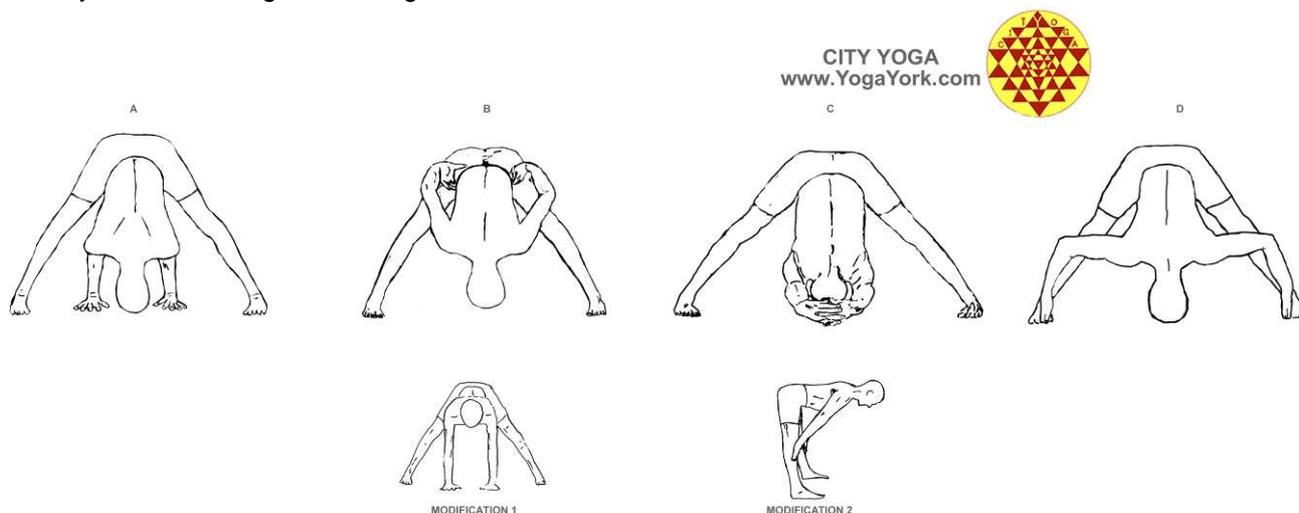


Prasarita Padottanasana A, B, C, D

Sideways Stretch

These wide legged forward bends stretch the legs intensely, and rejuvenates the brain with fresh blood. After the previous fairly demanding postures, they are excellent recuperative postures. They align, rebalance and soothe the mind and body by bringing positive calming energy to the heart and lungs, toning internal organs, exercise the hip and knee joints and strengthen the legs.



Entering the posture

From Samasthita inhale and softly jump or step back off the right foot. Take a wide stance so that the feet are approximately under the hands, which are outstretched. Ensure that the feet are strong with the arches lifted. On the next inhale, take the hands onto the hips and lift the chest and lengthen up through the front of the body. Engage uddiyana and mula bandha. On the exhale encourage length as you lead with the chest out, forward and down. Place the hands on the floor with the fingers and toes in line. The hands are a hip distance apart. Bend the elbows back through the legs maintaining a parallel position with the forearms (A).

The next postures involve different hand positions (b) hands are on the hips assisting the body to lengthen. In (c) hands are interlocked and brought over the head, fully opening the hips and shoulders. In (d) the first two fingers take hold of the big toes and the elbows extended out over the feet.

Lift out of each of the variations with strong bandhas and deep inhales.

Working within the postures

Within each of the above.

- Pivot the pelvis to deepen the rotation within your hip sockets.
 - Do not lock the knees.
 - Encourage length through the neck, from the base of the spine through the crown of the head on the inhale. Exhale move the abdomen through the legs.
 - Strongly activate the quadriceps.
- A) Tip the weight of your torso to your hands.
B) If the head doesn't touch the floor try bending the knees. Take a little weight onto the head and straighten the legs.
C) Straighten the elbows and keep the hands strong
D) Maintain length through the neck and push the elbows over the feet. Feel the shoulder blades separate.

Modified posture

In all of the above variations the knees can be bent. If the hamstrings are short and the above postures are not possible work in modification 2 with hands on shins. When able place the hand on the floor. Then progress to the full postures.